

Labouisse J.P.<sup>1</sup>, Caillon S.<sup>2</sup>, 2012. *Changes and adaptation in landscapes: a historical perspective on coconut plantation in Vanuatu (South Pacific)*. International meeting on agrobiodiversity across landscapes in a changing world. Domestication, adaptation and innovation. Montpellier 19-20 May 2012. Research Group Mosaïque. CNRS, CEFE, and Bioversity International.

<sup>1</sup> Cirad, UMR Agap, 34398 Montpellier

<sup>2</sup> CNRS, CEFE, UMR 5175, 34293 Montpellier

#### ABSTRACT

At the end of the 19th century in the New Hebrides archipelago, coconut cultivation geared towards copra production was developed on colonial estates, then from the 1930s onwards by Melanesian smallholders, who saw it as a means of gaining a foothold in the trading economy. The expansion of coconut plantings transformed farming systems, led to changes in the cultivate plants d, disrupted traditional land use practices, and resulted in monetization and increased food dependency on imported products among rural populations. With the drop in copra prices since the 1980s, Vanuatu farmers had to invent a new model of coconut based agrosystems by introducing new staple crops and fruit trees in their monospecific coconut groves. In that way, they improved the biological diversity of the agrosystem which is more complex and more resistant to climatic hazard, pests, and economic risks.